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Agenda item 64
Maintenance of international security – prevention of the violent disintegration of States

Letter dated 1 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a communiqué issued by the Government of Venezuela on 31 March 1999 concerning the crisis in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this communiqué circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 64.

(*Signed*) Ignacio **Arcaya**
Ambassador

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Annex

Communiqué issued on 31 March 1999 by the Government of Venezuela concerning the crisis in Kosovo

The Government of Venezuela, as a founding Member of the United Nations and as a democratic country, reaffirms its commitment to the principles that have guided its foreign policy: settlement of international disputes by peaceful means, defence of human rights, respect for the sovereignty of States and respect for international humanitarian law.

Based on these considerations, we urge all the parties involved in the conflict in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to revert to and exhaust all the peaceful means available under international law to stop the armed conflict that has been waged in recent weeks in that part of the European continent.

In this connection, we cannot conceal our concern about the use of force in that conflict, in disregard of the provisions of Articles 53 and 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, which clearly stipulate that the Security Council must authorize and be kept informed of military activities undertaken by any regional entity.

For all these reasons, the Government of Venezuela reaffirms its commitment to the United Nations, considering that it is the multilateral arrangement that governs contemporary international relations and the fundamental instrument for ending hostilities, as well as its commitment to the resumption of political negotiations at various levels with a view to the conclusion of a peace agreement that will avoid more bloodshed, more refugees and greater social costs for the populations affected, particularly the Kosovar people of Albanian origin, since all these phenomena adversely affect human rights and world peace.

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MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY - PREVENTION OF THE VIOLENT DISINTEGRATION OF STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 1 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the texts of the statements made by the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation and the State Duma Committee for International Affairs in connection with the aggression by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (see annexes).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annexes circulated as documents of the General Assembly, under agenda item 64, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) S. LAVROV

Annex I

Statement by the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in connection with the NATO aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

On 24 March 1999, in implementation of its decision to carry out missile and bomb strikes, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) engaged in direct aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, bringing Europe to the verge of war.

This represents yet another attempt to use crude military force to impose one's will on a sovereign State and establish a unipolar world order in the twenty-first century in which the fates of the peoples would be decided only in Washington. The supreme international body - the United Nations - is being discredited, and military and coercive methods are being established for the solution of international and domestic problems of sovereign States.

The numerous casualties among the population and the civilian targets which have been destroyed in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia demonstrate the utter baselessness of attempts to justify the missile and bomb strikes on the grounds of preventing a humanitarian catastrophe. Henceforth the United States of America and the other participants in the aggression will have completely lost all moral grounds for using slogans about the protection of human rights and freedoms.

The aggression by NATO against the sovereign Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is giving rise to deep indignation in all regions of the Russian Federation.

The initiators and perpetrators of this aggression and genocide against the peoples of Yugoslavia must inescapably bear the responsibility envisaged by the norms of international law for their crimes against humanity.

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation stresses the special responsibility of the parliamentarians of the NATO member countries for the virtual sanctioning of an act of aggression against a sovereign State Member of the United Nations, the consequences of which will inevitably lead to an escalation of terrorism and separatism on a world-wide scale.

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation supports the efforts of the President of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation aimed at an immediate halting of the missile and bomb strikes against the territory of Yugoslavia and a rapid settlement of the crisis which has developed, and believes that it is necessary that:

The President of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation should demand the convening of an emergency session of the United Nations General Assembly to consider the question of the blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations by the NATO member States, the aggression

against a sovereign Member State of the United Nations, and also the repeal of the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;

The Government of the Russian Federation should consider the question of providing economic and technical assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations;

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation body should initiate consideration of the fact of NATO aggression in order to work out measures for an immediate halt to the aggression and a return to the use of political means for the settlement of the Kosovo conflict;

The parliaments of the States parties of the Commonwealth of Independent States should be urged to support the position of the Russian Federation on a peaceful settlement of the crisis in the Balkans and to consider that situation at the meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the States parties of the Commonwealth of Independent States, taking into account the need to make appropriate additions to the Treaty on Collective Security;

The desire of the inhabitants of the Russian Federation to provide humanitarian assistance to the peoples of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should be supported;

The President of the Russian Federation, the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation should accelerate the signing of the joint statement by the President of the Russian Federation, the Federation Council and the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation "On strengthening civilian peace and political stability in the country";

A fund for assistance to the victims of the military aggression should be established.

Taking into account the particular acuteness of the political, military and strategic situation, the basic provisions of the national security concept of the Russian Federation should be reviewed in a critical manner and a series of measures necessary to strengthen the country's defence capability should be implemented without delay.

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation calls upon all the political and social forces of the country to consolidate efforts to stabilize the socio-economic situation in the country as the basis for the defence capability of the State and effective foreign policy aimed at protecting the national and State interests of the Russian Federation.

Annex II

Statement by the State Duma Committee on International Affairs in connection with the decision by NATO to carry out military action against Yugoslavia

The decision by NATO to carry out missile and bomb strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is irresponsible and extremely dangerous. The use of military force against a sovereign State Member of the United Nations without the approval of the United Nations Security Council can only be termed an act of aggression and a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of the principles and norms of international law and also of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between the Russian Federation and NATO. This action poses the risk of the outbreak of wide-scale military conflict in the Balkans, during which there would inevitably be many casualties and much destruction.

The policy of the NATO bloc has brought Europe to the verge of the most serious military and political crisis in recent decades. The leaders of the North Atlantic alliance clearly do not realize what serious consequences their military adventure against Yugoslavia could entail for Europe and the entire world. It will not only dash hopes for a peaceful political settlement of the situation in Kosovo and Metohija, but also undermine the foundations of stability in Europe and cause irreparable damage to European security.

The fact that NATO aggression against Yugoslavia is being planned despite the firm position of the Russian Federation confirms that the leaders of the States of the West, flouting the political obligations laid down in the documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Founding Act between the Russian Federation and NATO, no longer intend to take Russian interests into account and have adopted a more or less hostile position with regard to the Russian Federation.

The State Duma Committee for International Affairs firmly condemns the actions of NATO in relation to Yugoslavia and declares its solidarity with the people of fraternal Yugoslavia, who are faced with the threat of aggression. The Committee believes that the President of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation must work out a series of concrete measures which would be an adequate response to the military action of NATO. In the event of an escalation of the aggression, the most serious consideration must be given to the question of providing military assistance to Yugoslavia. It is obvious that under current conditions the continuation of any kind of cooperation between the Russian Federation and the North Atlantic bloc would, through the fault of NATO, be pointless.

The State Duma Committee for International Affairs believes that it is necessary to convene an emergency session of the State Duma to consider in detail the question of the aggressive actions of NATO and work out legislative measures for the support of friendly Yugoslavia.

The deputies who are members of the Committee demand that the leaders of the States members of the North Atlantic alliance should reconsider without delay the decision to carry out military strikes against Yugoslavia. The Committee believes that the negotiating process for a political settlement of the situation in Kosovo and Metohija must be resumed without delay, under the auspices of the United Nations, for the purpose of finding ways to resolve the conflict by exclusively peaceful means.

(Signed) V. I. LUKIN
Chairman of the Committee